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(*b*) how many of them have been sanctioned and paid, how many were refused and how many are still pending; and

(*c*) whether any steps has been taken to increase the loan amount to Rs. 1,000?

A.—(*a*) 1953–54 236
1954–55 61

(*b*) Number of applications sanctioned and paid—
1953–54 25
1954–55 3

Number of applications refused—
1953–54 155
1954–55 14

Number of applications pending—
1953–54 56
1954–55 44

(*c*) The question is under examination of the Government.

III.—MESSAGE FROM THE ASSEMBLY.

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :—" I have to announce to the House that I have received the following message, dated the 23rd February 1955, from the Hon. the Speaker, Madras Legislative Assembly :—

' In accordance with rule 114 of the Madras Assembly Rules, I transmit a copy of the Madras Indebted Agriculturists (Repayment of Debts). Bill, 1955 (L.A. Bill No. 2 of 1955), as passed by the Assembly, on the 23rd February 1955 and signed by me, for the concurrence of the Council '.

IV.—STATEMENT BY SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM UNDER RULE 41 (1) OF THE MADRAS COUNCIL RULES.

* SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM :—" Mr. Deputy Chairman, under rule 41 (1) of the Madras Council Rules and with your permission, I invite the attention of the Hon. the Minister for Public Works and the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration to a matter of urgent public importance, viz., the tragic death of a 7-year old boy by name Papa of Triplicane in Peyalvar Koil Street, as a result of the boy coming into contact with a live-wire, while he was playing near his house in that street in Triplicane. It was a new moon night and there was a large gathering for the *teppam* festival of the Parthasarathi Swami temple. The boy was playing near the lamp post and was electrocuted in the public street. The trap door of the lamp post had fallen and there was only a cardboard tied round at the time. I was there when the accident took place and therefore, I have the personal authority to make this statement with personal knowledge. It is most unfortunate that sufficient precaution had not been taken in spite of the report made to the authorities about the missing trap door. The lamp post has been provided with a door after the incident. There are similar posts still to be seen in that area without trap door, but only covered with a cardboard. This is a serious matter which has resulted in

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the death of the boy and our sympathies are due to the poor parents. As there is a statutory obligation under the Indian Electricity Act to ensure all precautionary measures against electricity accidents, I bring this matter to the notice of the Hon. Ministers for necessary enquiry and redress."

* THE HON. RAJA SRI SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI :—" Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, immediately on hearing about this, I sent for a report from the Chief Engineer for Electricity. He has said, as was mentioned by the hon. Member himself, that that post was not secured or locked properly, that this boy seemed to have put his hand into the switch box and meddled with the switches and that it must have caused electrocution. Actually the lamp post belongs to the Corporation of Madras and the Chief Engineer has suggested that it is for the Local Administration Department to call for a report from the Corporation of Madras. Anyhow, my Colleague, the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration to whom I have spoken, has asked for a report from the Madras Corporation. I am sure he will be getting a detailed report shortly." 4 p.m.

V.—GOVERNMENT BILL.

THE MADRAS INDEBTED AGRICULTURISTS (REPAYMENT OF DEBTS) BILL, 1955 (L.A. BILL NO. 2 OF 1955).

* THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" Sir, I beg to move—

'*That the Madras Indebted Agriculturists (Repayment of Debts) Bill*, 1955 (*L.A. Bill No.* 2 *of* 1955), as passed *by the Assembly, be taken into consideration.*'

Sir, this is a lucky Bill in the sense that it satisfies my friend, the hon. the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in so far as it was referred to a Joint Select Committee. I say 'lucky' because it will get easy and quick passage in the Council to-day. The Joint Select Committee went into the provisions of the Bill in detail and made certain changes. I may now refer to some of those changes.

" The year of test with regard to income, profession tax paid, etc., was changed from 1950–51 to 1952–53. In the original Bill, the test of property-tax or house-tax was fixed as Rs. 50 per half-year. It was changed into an annual property value of Rs. 600 per year in order to obviate the difficulty caused by the different rates of tax obtaining in the municipality and the panchayat, respectively. In the original Bill, creditors were entitled to collect their debt if the debt was Rs. 5,000 and below. This provision was deleted by the Committee. Then, provision has been made to extend the facilities in the matter of collection of debt available to co-operative societies and the Government to chit fund organisations. Then, with regard to payment of debt in instalments, the provision 'either arrears accrued up-to-date or one-eighth of the

* Printed as Appendix III on pages 160–165 infra.